
Sample Information Technology Assessment and Plan

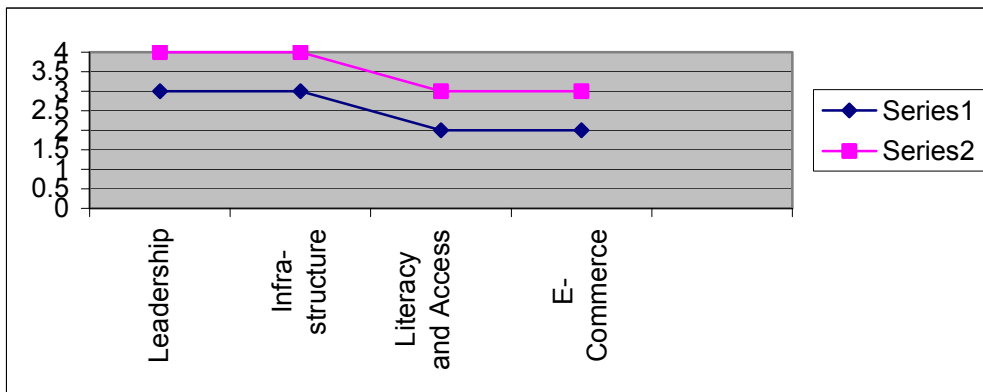
Our Community, Nebraska

2002

Our Community determined that our four priority areas are community leadership, telecommunications infrastructure; technology literacy and access; economic development and e-commerce. For each of these areas, Our Community's present level of e-readiness has been determined and a target level of e-readiness has been set. Each area was evaluated using a four-point scale, with level four being the highest level of e-readiness. For each area, an action plan has been developed to reach our target level of e-readiness.

The following chart illustrates Our Community's current and target levels of e-readiness:

Current and Target Levels of E-Readiness



Community Leadership

Community leadership is a vital component of community and economic development efforts. Efforts should be made to continue to strengthen this area. The information technology committee used the following scale to evaluate community leadership:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 | Many business and community leaders do not understand the importance of information technology. There is little community support for IT-related development. |
| 2 | Some business and community leaders understand the importance of information technology, but information technology development is not being addressed by the community or region. There is some community support for IT-related development. |
| 3 | Many business and community leaders understand the importance of information technology and there are efforts to cooperatively address information technology development. There is moderate community support for IT-related development. |
| 4 | All key community and business leaders understand the importance of information technology and are working cooperatively to address information technology development. There is widespread community support for IT-related development. |

Current E-Readiness Level

On a scale of 1 to 4, Our Community is at level 3 in the area of community leadership. While many businesses and community leaders understand the importance of information technology development, the community as a whole has not worked together to address information technology development.

Strengths

Our Community has a strong history of working together. There is strong community support for economic development initiatives.

Resources and Assets:

Our Community has an existing leadership development program.

Target E-Readiness Level

In two to five years, our goal is to be at level 4.

Action Plan

1. The information technology taskforce which developed this plan will become an ongoing committee and will provide leadership in implementing the plan.
2. IT professionals will be encouraged to participate in the leadership development program and take a more active role in the IT committee and other development efforts.
3. Community leaders and interested community members will be invited to an IT tour to see firsthand how IT is being used by local businesses, the school, and the hospital.

Telecommunications Infrastructure

Telecommunications infrastructure is becoming increasingly important for both small and large businesses, education, health care and government services. The information technology committee used the following scale to evaluate telecommunications infrastructure:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 | Cable modem, DSL or wireless services are not available in the community. |
| 2 | Some homes and business have cable modem, DSL or wireless service available. |
| 3 | Many residences and business have cable modem, DSL or wireless service available. |
| 4 | All residences and businesses have cable modem, DSL or wireless service available. Satisfaction with broadband services is high. |

Current E-Readiness Level

On a scale of 1 to 4, Our Community is at level 3 in the area of telecommunications infrastructure. Within the past year, the availability of broadband services within the county has greatly improved. However, for rural residents of the county, broadband access remains problematic.

Strengths

There are a number of providers within the county. Our Community has a number of large businesses which are heavy users of telecommunications services.

Resources and Assets

Strong demand for broadband services exists in the local community and in rural areas of the county.

Target E-Readiness Level

In two to five years, our goal is to be at level 4.

Action Plan

1. Demand for broadband services in rural areas of the county will be documented. With this information, the information technology committee will contact wireless Internet service providers about providing service in rural areas of the county.

Technology Literacy and Access

In order to realize the benefits of the Information Age, community members must have access to information technology and must know how to use it. The information technology committee used the following scale to evaluate technology literacy and access:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 | Less than 50% of households are online and public access to computers and the Internet is very limited. |
| 2 | Approximately 50% of households are online and public access to computers and the Internet is available in at least one location twenty or more hours a week. |
| 3 | Over 50% of households are online and public access to computers and the Internet is available in at least one location at times convenient for most users. |
| 4 | At least 75% of households are online and at least 75% of adults are Internet users. Mobile access to the Internet through WIFI networks is available in several areas in the community. |

Current E-Readiness Level

On a scale of 1 to 4, Our Community is at level 2 in the area of technology literacy and access. The library has two terminals available for public access and is open 20 hours a week. The committee estimates that approximately 50 of households are online.

Strengths

The high school has a strong technology program. All graduates are proficient in the use of the Internet and common computer applications.

Resources and Assets

The school computer lab could be used for computer and Internet classes. The senior center is interested in providing public access terminals and hosting computer classes. The University of Nebraska Extension program offers the Master Navigator Internet training program.

Target E-Readiness Level

In two to five years, our goal is to be at level 3.

Action Plan

1. Coordinate a teleliteracy drive to get at least 100 community members to take an Internet or computer class.
2. Work with the library board to plan a fundraiser to purchase two additional public access computers.
3. Work with the senior center to offer computer and Internet classes there once a month.

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4. Work with the community college to offer advanced computer classes at the high school.
 5. Partner with other communities in the region to create a regional technology learning center.

Economic Development and E-Commerce

Communities are finding that adequate telecommunications infrastructure is necessary to recruit new businesses and to retain existing businesses. Information technology can also help local businesses expand markets, reduce costs, and improve customer service. The information technology committee used the following scale to evaluate economic development and e-commerce.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 | Economic development efforts do not address Information Age businesses. Few local businesses are using information technology to improve productivity and expand markets. |
| 2 | There is some recognition in the community that information technology is an economic development tool. Some local businesses are using information technology effectively to improve productivity and expand markets. |
| 3 | Economic development efforts are beginning to target Information Age businesses. Most small businesses are using information technology effectively to improve productivity and expand markets. At least 50% of businesses have a Web site and 85% of businesses are online. |
| 4 | Economic development efforts are tied to the needs of Information Age businesses. Nearly all small businesses have integrated information technology into their business processes and plans. |

Current E-Readiness Level

On a scale of 1 to 4, Our Community is at level 2 in the area of economic development and e-commerce. Several businesses are using information to improve productivity and expand markets. However, far fewer than 85% of businesses are online.

Strengths

Our community has a strong chamber of commerce and has just hired an economic development director. The local telephone company is willing to work with new and existing businesses to meet their telecommunications needs.

Resources and Assets

The University of Nebraska Extension program offers the Nebraska Electronic Main Street program and the EDGE training program for entrepreneurs. The local community college offers courses in e-commerce. The high school FBLA

leader has expressed an interest in pairing students with local businesses in an e-commerce project.

Target E-Readiness Level

In two to five years, our goal is to be at level 3.

Action Plan

1. Survey local businesses including home-based businesses to determine their current usage of information technology and to ascertain their training needs.
2. Work with the Chamber of Commerce to offer a business after hours event focusing on the use of information technology in local businesses.
3. Work with the University of Nebraska Extension, the local community college, and the high school to offer e-commerce and information technology training as determined by the business survey.
4. Explore the development of a technology business incubator.